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J. Taylor. The Author's Gift

A

S E R M O N

Preach'd at the PARISH-CHURCH of

St. Peter's at Arches in the City of *L I N C O L N*

SEPTEMBER 18, 1752:

At the Triennial Meeting of the Subscribers to the
Charity-Schools in the said City.

By *WILLIAM GEORGE*, D. D. DEAN of LINCOLN,
and Chaplain in Ordinary to His MAJESTY.

PUBLISH'D at the Request of the MAYOR, and CORPORATION; and
the NOBILITY, GENTRY, and CLERGY, concern'd in that
Charity.



L I N C O L N;
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DEUT. xv. 11.

*For the poor shall never cease out of the land:
therefore I command thee, saying, thou shalt open
thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor,
and to thy needy, in thy land.*

IN these Words the inspir'd Legislator instruct's
his People, that the unequal Distribution of
the good Things of this World is the Effect,
if not of the positive Appointment, yet at least
of the permissive Providence, of the Creator of
all Things. As he has made us all equal in many
Respects; equally the Creation of his Almighty
Power; the Objects of his paternal Care; the
Dependents on his watchful Providence; and, what
is much more, all Partakers of the same precious

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Promises

Promises, and Heirs to the same glorious Inheritance; so he could, if he had pleas'd, have made us equal too, in the outward Figure and Circumstances of Life. That he has not done so is very visible and manifest; and why he has not done so is almost as evident: although, if it were not, it is our Duty neither boldly to expostulate with him, nor frowardly and rebelliously to murmur against him; but with Humility and Patience, Contentment and Resignation, submit to his Appointment, and acquiesce in his Dispensation. Shall the Thing form'd say to him that form'd it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the Potter Power over the Clay of the same Lump to make one Vessel unto Honour, and another unto Dishonour? (†)

But there is still less Ground of Complaint, when we reflect, that our own Reason can suggest many wise and good Ends which are answer'd by this Disparity in the Allotment of earthly Things, and the Discrimination of Mankind into Rich and Poor. Were it not for this Difference, there would be

(†) Rom. ix. 20.

an End of that Subordination, without which Societies cannot subsist. Disputes which could never be adjusted, and Competitions which could never be determin'd, would be constantly kept on foot, while all would be equally desirous of governing, and all equally unwilling to be govern'd. But, as in the present Constitution of Things, a larger Proportion of Property gives a superior Weight, and Dignity, and Authority, where other Conditions and Pretensions are nearly equal; so the Want of that Advantage disposes those who are so circumstanc'd, to acquiesce in that Superiority, and to chuse rather to be protected by it, than to be still lower degraded, and perhaps totally crush'd, by contending with it.

On the other Hand; they whose *Lot is fallen in a fairer Ground, and who have a more goodly Heritage*, will be induc'd, even for their own Sakes, to afford to their poor Brethren their Encouragement, their Assistance, and their Liberality: considering, if they consider at all, that if there were no Poor, there would be no Rich: that is, that

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the Rich, without the Assistance of the Poor, could neither receive nor enjoy the Benefit of those Possessions which distinguish 'em from them. He who can *say to one, (†) Go, and he goeth; and to another, come, and he cometh;* must either do his own Business, or leave it undone, if he cannot find those, whose Humility of Mind and Fortune makes 'em condescend to accept of those Rewards of their Labor, which his Affluence enables him to afford them. (*) He whose *Barns are fill'd with Plenty,* and whose *Presses burst out with new Wine,* would find his Luxury turn'd to *the Bread of Adversity,* and *the Water of Affliction,* if he were to cultivate the Land, and tread the Wine-press himself: which he must either do, or want the Benefit of 'em, that is, be poor himself, if there were not those who wanted the Necessaries, more than he does the Comforts and Conveniencies, and perhaps the Superfluities, of Life.

Thus the wise Providence of that God, who

(†) Mat. viii. 9.

(*) Prov. iii. 9.

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is the Father of them all, has made the Rich and Poor meet together in such a Manner, as to be mutually assisting and serviceable to each other; and by a reciprocal Communication of good Offices, to carry on the Purposes of his gracious Administration. He might, if it had been his Will, have appointed a different Constitution of Things in the natural World; but in their present Disposition, it is necessary that *the Poor should never cease out of the Land*, as it is, that *the Rich should open their Hands wide unto them*; to the End that, as the Apostle says, (†) *one Man's Abundance may supply another Man's Want, that there may be an Equality*. By which we are to understand, not an absolute but a relative Equality; proportion'd to that Subordination and Distinction of Offices, Ranks, and Characters, without which the Course of this World cannot be peaceably order'd. What St. Paul says of spiritual Edification may as pertinently be applied to temporal; (*) *the whole Body fitly join'd together, and compacted by that which every Joint supplieth, according to the*

(†) 11 Cor. viii. 14.

(*) Eph. iv. 16.

effectual

*effectual Working in the Measure of every Part,
maketh Encrease of the Body, unto the Edifying
of itself in Love.*

But besides these natural Reasons, there are many moral ones too, for this unequal Dispensation of temporal Blessings; as it furnishes Occasion for the Exercise of many Virtues and Graces, for which there would otherwise be no Opportunity. Patience, Humility, Contentment, Resignation to the Will of God, Submission and Obedience to their Superiors, Industry in their several Callings, are Duties which those in lower Life have constant calls, from their Situation, to put in Practice: and if they do so, the Exercise of those Virtues will either wholly remove, or at least greatly alleviate, the Pressure and Hardships of their present Condition; and carry their own Reward along with them in this Life, and procure for 'em an infinitely greater Reward in that which is to come. If they are contented with their Lot, it yields 'em all the Happiness the greatest Affluence could afford them; and it is well, if it affords so much.

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To him who can be content with a little, a very little is sufficient ; but he, whose Avarice and Ambition grasps at the Empire of the World, will not be satisfy'd when he has obtain'd it ; and consequently less happy amidst all his envy'd Splendor and Greatness, than the poor despis'd Man, whose Virtue is more than equivalent to great Riches, since he is (*) *content with what he hath.*

Much more might be said on the Duties resulting from a low and humble Condition of Life ; but as I am not now addressing to those who are to receive, but those whose Duty, and I doubt not, Inclination, is to give ; it will be more pertinent to consider the Obligations to Charity and Liberality incumbent on the Rich, arising from that particular Situation in which it has pleas'd the Providence of God to place 'em. The Text acquaints us, that it was God's Design and Intention, that (†) *the Poor should be always with us,* and assigns that as a Reason, why we should always be ready to *open our Hearts and our Hands*

(*) 1 Tim. vi. 6.

(†) Mat. xxvi. 11.

to relieve their Necessities. (*) *The Earth is the Lord's and the Fulness thereof*, and (†) *He has given it to the Children of Men*, tho' in very different and unequal Proportions. He could doubtless, if he had pleas'd, have made them as equal in Fortune, as they are by Nature; or have supply'd the Deficiencies by a constant Miracle; as he fed his chosen People, in the barren Wilderness, by Food from Heaven; and his Prophet by the Ministration of the most voracious of Animals, while there was a Famine in the Land. He who feedeth the *Ravens when they call upon him*, can cause them to support his indigent Servants in the same Distress: and the Sun, (§) *who knoweth his going down*, will not (§§) *hast to do it*, when he is countermanded by his Almighty Creator.

But as in the natural World God has establish'd a regular and stated Method of Procedure, from which he does not ordinarily deviate; so in the moral one, he generally chuses to carry on the great Designs of his Providence by the voluntary Operations of

(*) Psalm xxiv. 1. (†) cxv. 16. (§) civ. 19. (§§) Jos. x. 13
those

those he has made free Agents ; and whose Obedience to his Commands he has appointed to be both the Tryal and the Reward of their Virtues. Accordingly, as he has plac'd some in so low a Condition as to want, and therefore gladly to accept, the Liberality of their wealthier Brethren ; so, he has by his free and unmerited Bounty, which he design'd to extend beyond the immediate Objects of it, enabled others to supply their Wants ; and given 'em the honourable Post of being the Depositarys of his Munificence ; the Dispensers of his Blessings ; and the Substitutes and Representatives of his all-gracious Providence. Let us not then desert the glorious Station, or neglect the important Trust ! As God has committed the Poor to our Care, let us not return 'em upon his Hands, and leave those to Providence whom Providence has left to Us !

Indeed all our Talents are, strictly speaking, only lent us as a Trust, not vested in us as an absolute Donation. God alone has an original
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and unalienable Property in 'em; he has committed 'em to our Management for the Benefit of others, as well as of ourselves, and *for the setting forth of his Glory.* (*) *Every good Gift cometh down from the Father of Lights :* and we ought to cause (†) *our Light so to shine before Men, that they may not only see, but feel too, our good Works, and glorify our Father which is in Heaven..* But if we either idly and unprofitably hide our Talents; or riotously and dissolutely squander 'em; or, which is still worse, if instead of using 'em to the good of our Brethren, we abuse 'em to their Hurt and Prejudice; if we employ our Wisdom and Knowledge, not to inform and instruct, but to misguide and pervert, or circumvent and impose on others; or our Power and Riches not to relieve the Necessitous, support the Weak, and comfort the afflicted; but behave as if we were exalted above 'em only to look down, and trample, on 'em: if, when we ought to bind up their Wounds, we tear 'em open; and, when we should make 'em *of a chearful Countenance,* we (§) *grind*

(*) James i. 17.

(†) Mat. v. 16.

(§) Isa. iii. 15.

the Faces of the Poor, and exasperate 'em by that
 (†) *Oppression which will make wise Men mad :*
 we shall convert those Gifts which were given,
 or rather lent us, for a Blessing to others, into the
 severest Curse to ourselves. How sorrowful an
 Account shall we give, if when our common Lord
 and Master come's to reckon with us, as he one
 Day certainly will, for the Talents he deposited
 with us, and for which we are accountable to his
 Justice, he shall find us, not only not relieving,
 assisting, supporting, and comforting, but *beating*
and abusing our Fellow-servants.

But it is not only this cruel and inhuman
 Abuse of our Possessions, and of our Brethren,
 that is highly criminal; but we abuse 'em too,
 if we do not impart some Share of 'em to the
 Relief of their Necessitys. In what particular
 Proportion this should be done, we have no
 Direction either from the Nature of the
 Thing, or any positive Precept concerning it.

(†) Eccles. vii. 7.

What is due of strict Justice may be ascertain'd by a determinate Standard : but it is of the Nature and Essence of Charity to be free and unconstrain'd : (†) *Freely ye have receiv'd, says our Lord, freely give.* As all we enjoy, and all we hope for, is owing to the unforc'd and unmerited Goodness of our merciful Father; and as both our Duty and Happiness consists in approaching, as near as human Frailty will permit, to his adorable Perfections; we ought to repay some Part of the Debt, both in Obedience to his Will, and in Imitation of his Goodness : especially considering, that he condescends to accept it, not as the Discharge of an Obligation on our Part, but as a Kindness confer'd on himself. For as it has been already observ'd, that the Rich, in distributing and communicating God's Blessings, are, in some Sense, his Deputys and Substitutes ; so are the Poor too, in another Sense, consider'd by himself as his Representatives in receiving 'em at their Hands. (*) *He that hath Pity on the Poor, says the wise Man, lendeth unto the Lord, not repayeth what*

(†) Mat. x. 8.

(*) Prov. xix, 17.

was lent by him ; *and look what he layeth out, it shall be paid him again.* It shall be paid him in that secret Joy and Satisfaction, which the most eloquent Tongue cannot describe, but which the good Heart feel's, from the Overflowings of Tenderness and Humanity. (†) *The merciful Man doth good unto his own Soul ; and receive's at least as much Pleasure as it is possible for him to bestow.* His Treasures are effectually secur'd to him by being parted with, and multiply'd by being communicated. With what Rapture and Transport does Job, even in the midst of the severest Afflictions human Nature can undergo, reflect on his own Compassion and Humanity in the Days of his Prosperity ! *O that I were as in Months past,* says he, (*) *as in the Days when the Lord preserved me : when his Candle shin'd upon my Head, and when by his Light I walk'd through Darknefs : when I wash'd my Steps with Butter, and the Rock pour'd me out Rivers of Oil ! When the Ear heard me, then it blessed me ; and when the Eye saw me,*

(†) Prov. xi. 17.

(*) Job xxix, 2, 3, &c.

it gave witness to me : because I deliver'd the Poor that cry'd, the Fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The Blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me : and I caus'd the Widow's Heart to sing for Joy. The good Man seem's to be not so much concern'd for what he suffer'd himself, as for his Inability to prevent and relieve the Sufferings of others. He bear's his own Burthen with the more seeming Impatience, because it hinder's him from easing that of his afflicted Brethren.

But farther : what the merciful Man *layeth out shall be paid him again* even in Returns in Kind in this World. *Godliness*, of which Charity is a principal Part, *has the Promise*, say's the Apostle, (†) *of the Life which now is, as well as of that which is to come.* A little thus dispos'd of will consecrate and sanctify the whole Substance, and entail a Blessing upon it. (*) *For this Thing*, say's Moses in the Words immediately preceding the

(†) 1 Tim. iv. 8.

(*) Deut. xv. 10.

Text, *the Lord shall bless thee in all thy Works, and in all that thou puttest thine Hand unto.* (†) *The Lord shall command the Blessing upon thee in thy Store-houses; and the Lord shall make thee plenteous in Goods, in the Fruit of thy Body, and in the Fruit of thy Cattle, and in the Fruit of thy Ground. The Lord shall open unto thee his good Treasure, the Heaven to give the Rain unto thy Land in his Season, and to bless all the Work of thine Hand.* 'The merciful Man's (*) Prayers and Alms shall come up as a Memorial before God, and shall return, like the Dew of Heaven which watereth the Earth from whence it ascended, with Comfort and Refreshment into his own Bosom. .

And let not a timorous Anxiety for those who are to inherit after us, and a wicked Diffidence in God's Promises, withhold our Hands. I believe no Family was ever the poorer for what the Father of it bestow'd in Acts of Charity; and

(†) Deut. xxviii, 8, &c.

(*) Acts x, 4.

that

that Experience will verify the Observation of David, (§) *I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not seen the Righteous forsaken, nor his Seed begging Bread. He is ever merciful and lendeth, and his Seed is blessed.* A prudent Care, and decent Provision for our Families, in Proportion to their Rank and Condition in Life, is certainly a Duty; but such an unreasonable and unchristian Sollicitude for 'em as shut's up our Bowels of Compassion against our poor Brethren, is the Way to derive a Curse on our Estates; (†) to make *our Riches corrupted, and our Garments moth-eaten; our Gold and Silver to be canker'd, and the Rust of 'em to be a Witness against us.* Riches, like all other earthly Things, are subject to many known, and to many unknown Contingencies: the best, and most probable Way of securing the Possession of 'em in our Houses, is to acquire 'em honestly, to receive 'em thankfully, enjoy 'em temperately, and communicate 'em charitably. At the worst, if they

(§) Psalm xxxvii, 25, 26.

(†) James v, 2, 3.

should

should then (†) *make to themselves Wings, and fly away*, we shall have the Comfort of reflecting, that they are not wholly perish'd, and that there is one Part of 'em which can never be lost. When we have provided in the most careful Manner for our Household, we can do nothing better, than to leave Providence in trust for 'em; nor bequeath 'em a richer Inheritance than God's Blessing. The best concerted human Means of continuing 'em in our Familys may fail, and disappoint all our Precautions; when the charitable (§) *Bread, cast on the unfruitful Waters, shall return*, tho' perhaps *after many Days*, with abundant Increase.

But, what is of infinitely greater Concern and Importance, this is the surest Way to secure to ourselves a Reversion of what can never disappoint us; (*) *an Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserv'd in Heaven for us*. (§§) *Here we have no continuing City, but seek for*

(†) Prov. xxiii. 5. (§) Ecclef. xi, 1. (*) 1 Pet. i, 4. (§§) Heb. xiii, 14.
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one to come, which hath Foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God. And if we (†) make to ourselves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, as we have constant Opportunitys of doing, when we fail, as some Time or other we must, they will receive us into everlasting Habitations.

To apply what has been said to the immediate Occasion of our assembling ourselves together this Day in the House of God : which is to make some Provision for the Instruction, in the first Rudiments of Christian Knowledge, of such Children, who are either destitute of Parents, or whose Parents are destitute of Means to make such Provision for them. The Methods of exercising the Virtue of Charity are various, as the Objects of it, and the Necessitys of human Nature. But there is hardly any Demand for it which can be more inviting, any Method more likely to be productive of real, and substantial, and lasting Good, than providing for the timely Cultivation

(†) Luke xvi. 9.

of the Minds of poor Children, whose Indigence would, as they grow up, expose 'em to all the Temptations to Mischief and Wickedness; and their Want of Knowledge to distinguish between Good and Evil dispose 'em to comply with those Temptations, to the Destruction both of their Bodys and their Souls. This is to imprint a Sense of their Duty on their Hearts, before they have admitted a worse Impression: to give a right Determination to their Wills, before they have given themselves a wrong one, and while they are yet ductile, and flexible, and susceptible of any: to sow the Soil with good Seed, when the Weeds have not yet occupied it, which would otherwise prevent the Admission of the wholesome Grain, or hinder the Growth of it. It is of infinite Advantage to have an early Prepossession on the right Side, when, without it, we are liable to so many Prejudices on the wrong one. *Train up a Child, say's the wisest of Men, (†) in the Way that he should go, and when he is old he will not de-*

(†) Prov. xxii, 6.

part from it. He who is once set in the true Road, with proper Instructions, though conducted but a little Way, may, if he will use his Eyes, continue in it to the End: but he who let's out in utter Ignorance of the right Path, where so many wrong ones present themselves to his Choice, and where there is so much bad Company ready to mislead him, must be very fortunate if he directs himself into it.

Of such Importance is the tincturing of young Minds, though but with the first Elements of Religion and Virtue. The low Attainments acquir'd in these humble Seminarys are sufficient to qualify 'em to be useful, at least not hurtful, Members of Society, in those inferior Stations to which their Birth has destin'd 'em, and their Education form'd 'em. It is not the Design of these Institutions to instruct the Children of the Poor in the polite and ornamental Parts of Learning, which might set their Minds above their Fortunes, and make 'em disdain to stoop to those
 menial

menial and fervile Offices, which must be done by some or other of the Community, and which therefore are the natural Allotment of those, whose low Rank should enure their Minds to Humility, and their Bodys to Labor.

For, after all, the most wholesome and beneficial Bread that can be dealt to 'em, is that which they earn by the Sweat of their own Brows. No Man has a Right to be fed at the Expence of another's Industry, who is able to feed himself by his own. His own Hands should provide Meat to his Stomach, and Digestion to his Meat, and so Strength and Vigor to his whole Body; which will enable him, in some station or other, to be a serviceable Member to the Society, instead of being a dead Weight, and an unprofitable Burthen, if not a Pest, and a Nuisance, to it.

It is the Interest, therefore, as well as the Duty, of those, whose Stations and Fortunes have rais'd 'em above the Vulgar, to use that Superiority

ority they enjoy, in providing Materials, and furnishing Opportunitys, to exercise the Industry of the Poor; and to employ those Hands in the Service of the Public, which would otherwise, at best be idle; more probably employ'd in Mischief. On this Account, it is with great Pleasure I hear of a (†) generous and public-spirited Design to establish a new Manufactory in this very antient, and once very flourishing and opulent, City. It has indeed, through the Fluctuation and Vicissitude of human Affairs, and the Alterations of the Channels of Commerce, been for many Ages sunk below it's former Dignity and Splendor. But why may we not reasonably hope, that the same Spirit, which has conducted the same Designs in other populous Places to a prosperous Issue, under the Direction of the same Providence, which always maketh *the diligent Hand rich*, may produce the like Revolution in our Favor; and make the Work of the laborious Poor a

(†) See the Proposals at the End.

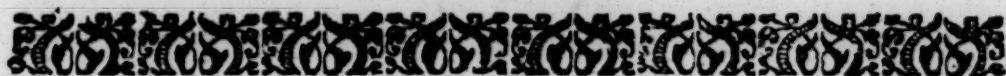
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Means of supporting those whom Age or Impotence has disabled from working; and cause Industry and Charity to go hand in hand, and mutually support one another?

May the Blessing of the good God attend on both; and (†) *let all that go by say, The Lord prosper you, we wish you good luck in the Name of the Lord!*
To whom be Glory &c.

(†) Psalm cxxix, 8.

F I N I S.



P R O P O S A L S

*For establishing the Manufacture of Camblets and
Shalloons in the City of LINCOLN. 1752.*

It is proposed,

I. **T**HAT two good Weavers, and two good Spinners, shall be invited to settle in the City aforesaid; and that they shall be allow'd for every Piece of Goods they make, the same Wages that are given, for making the same Sorts, in the Counties where they are now manufactur'd.

II. That as an Encouragement for them to settle at the said City, a Reward of Fifteen Pounds shall be given to him who shall weave, or cause to be wove, the most and best Work of that Sort he is employ'd about, within the Space of Twelve Months.

III. That a Reward of Ten Pounds shall likewise be given to the other Weaver, at the Expiration of Twelve Months, provided he hath continued
A diligent

diligent and industrious in his own Labour, and in instructing those who are appointed to work under him.

IV. That a Reward of six Pounds shall be given to that Spinner who shall spin, or cause to be spun, the most and best Work, within the Space of twelve Months.

V. That a Reward of four Pounds shall likewise be given to the other Spinner, provided she hath continued diligent and industrious in her own Labour, and in instructing those who are appointed to work under her.

VI. That if either, or both, the Weavers settling in Lincoln as aforesaid, be married, he or they upon their first coming shall be allow'd five Pounds, which said Sum shall be deducted out of the Premium adjudged to him at the End of the first twelve Months.

VII. That at the Expiration of the second and third Years, the Weavers and Spinners shall be entitled to and receive the same Rewards on the above Conditions.

VIII. That at the Expiration of the third Year, if either, or both Weavers continue diligent and industrious, he or they shall receive the Freedom of the City aforesaid.

IX. That if either, or both of them, shall be then
desirous

desirous of working upon his own seperate Account, he or they shall have the Loan of twenty-five Pounds, for the Space of ten Years, without Interest, upon giving proper Security for the Principle at the End of the said Term.

X. Assoon as any shall be so well instructed as to weave seperately from his Instructor, he that shall weave, or cause to be wove, the most and best Work of that Sort he shall be employ'd about, within the Space of twelve Months, shall receive a Reward of ten Pounds; and the next in degree of Merit, both as to Quantity and Goodness, a Reward of five Pounds at the same Time.

XI. She who shall spin, or causes to be spun, the most and best Work within the Space of twelve Months, shall receive a Reward of five Pounds; and the next to her in Merit, both for Quantity and Goodness, a Reward of three Pounds, at the same Time.

XII. He who shall weave the most and best Work by himself within twelve Months, shall receive a Reward of five Pounds, provided he hath had no other Reward that Year; and also she that spins the most and best Work within twelve Months, shall receive a
Reward

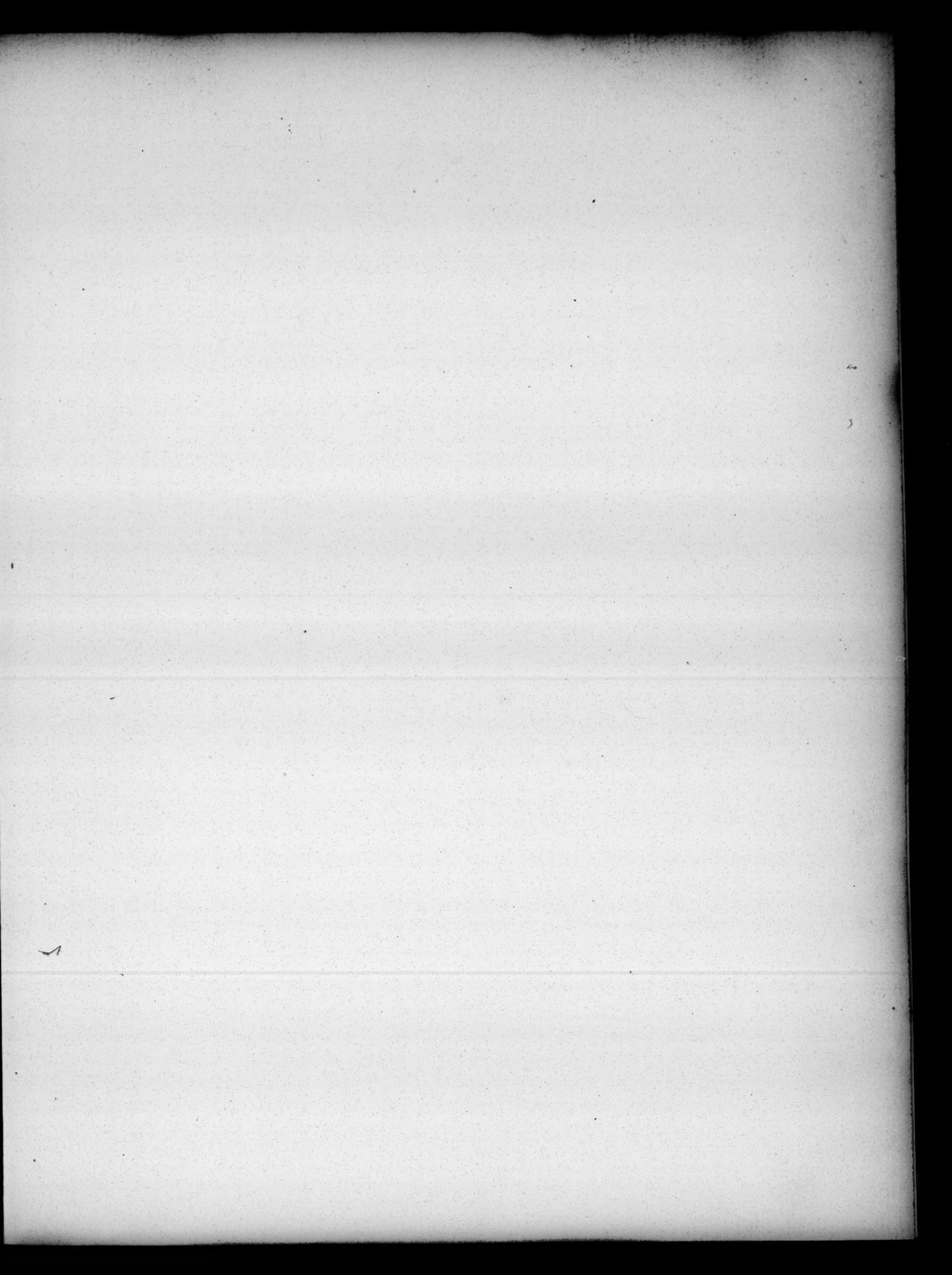
Reward of two Pounds, provided she has had no other Reward that Year.

XIII. Each Weaver shall upon his first settling, or as soon as he can conveniently after, take as many Apprentices as he can conveniently instruct. And both the Spinners shall undertake to teach all such as shall be sent to them, and are capable of learning to spin.

XIV. The Mayor and Alderman for the Time being, Mr. John Cockle, Mr. Robert Waterman, Mr. John Brown, Mr. Philip Pym, Mr. Jonathan Durance, and Mr. William Johnson, being of the Common-Council, of the same City, are appointed Trustees, for seeing the afore said Proposals put into due Execution.

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